

## **Northfields Community Library: Equality and Diversity Policy**

Northfields Community Library is an approachable and diverse organisation which values and respects peoples' different backgrounds, characteristics, ideas and beliefs; it is responsive to the needs of young people, staff, volunteers, delivery partners and all other stakeholders.

At Northfields Library, we consider that equality means breaking down barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal opportunities and access for all groups both in employment, volunteering, the use of the service by the public and provision of goods and services.

We consider diversity to mean celebrating difference and valuing everyone. Each person is an individual with visible and non-visible differences and by respecting this everyone can feel valued for their contributions which is beneficial not only for the individual but for Northfields Library too.

We acknowledge that equality and diversity are not inter-changeable but inter-dependent. There can be no equality of opportunity if difference is not valued and harnessed.

In running Northfields Community Library we will actively consider how our organisation and services can be developed and delivered to appeal to all sections of the community. This equality and diversity policy sets out how we will welcome people of all characteristics:

- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Sex (gender)
- Age

Consideration of equality and diversity will run through everything that the Northfields Community Library does. For example:

- Selection of trustees
- Recruitment of volunteers
- Stock selection and display
- Community Offer
- Displays and information hub
- Publicity materials and marketing strategy
- Language of materials

- Building design

## Equality and Diversity Commitments

### **Trustees and Volunteers**

Although the 2010 Equality Act is not applicable to volunteers, Northfields Community Library is committed to ensuring that we adhere to the core messages – ensuring volunteers are treated equally and free from discrimination, including protection against harassment and rights to accessibility.

To this end Northfields Community Library will:

- Ensure that its trusteeships volunteering opportunities are accessible and are a positive experience for all volunteers, regardless of their background, characteristics, ideas and beliefs, wherever possible.
- Seek to recruit trustees and volunteers with different backgrounds, cultures and career fields who bring a broad range of skills, expertise and knowledge.

Achieving our equality and diversity policy places certain responsibilities upon our trustees and volunteers:

- Volunteers will receive training on the equality and diversity policy and its practical implementation.
- Volunteers are responsible for ensuring that they are non-discriminatory and respectful in their working practices. This includes using non-discriminatory language and being sensitive to the cultural differences in body language and behaviour.

### **Library access and offer**

- We will provide equality, diversity and inclusivity training to motivate, educate and inspire staff to ensure the library represents a truly inclusive and accessible environment and promotes itself and its services as such.
- We will promote events to diverse audiences and marginalised groups and ensure the venue is welcoming to them.
- We will ensure that events are accessible to all audiences by providing wheelchair access and by being open to providing additional support where appropriate.
- We will design our hours to engage new users and re-engage users who do not currently use the library because of full time work and other day time commitments.
- We will create events that bring people together, with a drive for multi-generational engagement in activities that are 'age-blind'.

### **Marketing and publicity**

- We will market our offer and activities on different platforms, online, physical and community based, to raise awareness of our activities in the library amongst different types of library users.
- We will gather insight and work with partners, including the PCT, schools, nurseries, as well as local religious groups and community organisations to target our offer to those who can most benefit.

### **Stock selection and display**

- We will ensure that the library stocks a range of inclusive books as part of the main book collection and that these are given equal status.
- We will ensure that our stock selection specification highlights the importance of inclusivity and diversity in books in our service.
- We will increase our book stock relevant to diversity/inclusivity, stocking books by authors and illustrators from marginalised backgrounds.
- We will consider ways in which we display, position, promote and use inclusive and diverse titles to ensure they reach the greatest audience.
- We will keep accessibility in mind when selecting books. Consider the paper, the typeface, layout, contrast and any background behind the text.

### Developing a diverse and inclusive library

- We will see out information and advice to help us to build a diverse and inclusive library offer. Organisations that can help us to do this include:
- **Children's Book Council's Diversity Initiative:** <https://www.cbcdiversity.com/>
- **Inclusive Minds:** <https://www.inclusiveminds.com/about> - we are subscribers to the inclusive minds newsletter.
- **Everybody In:** <http://www.everybodyin.co.uk/library-advice.php>